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Idyls of the Yosemite Valley



Robert Jarvie Buchanan

Idyls of the Yosemite Valley

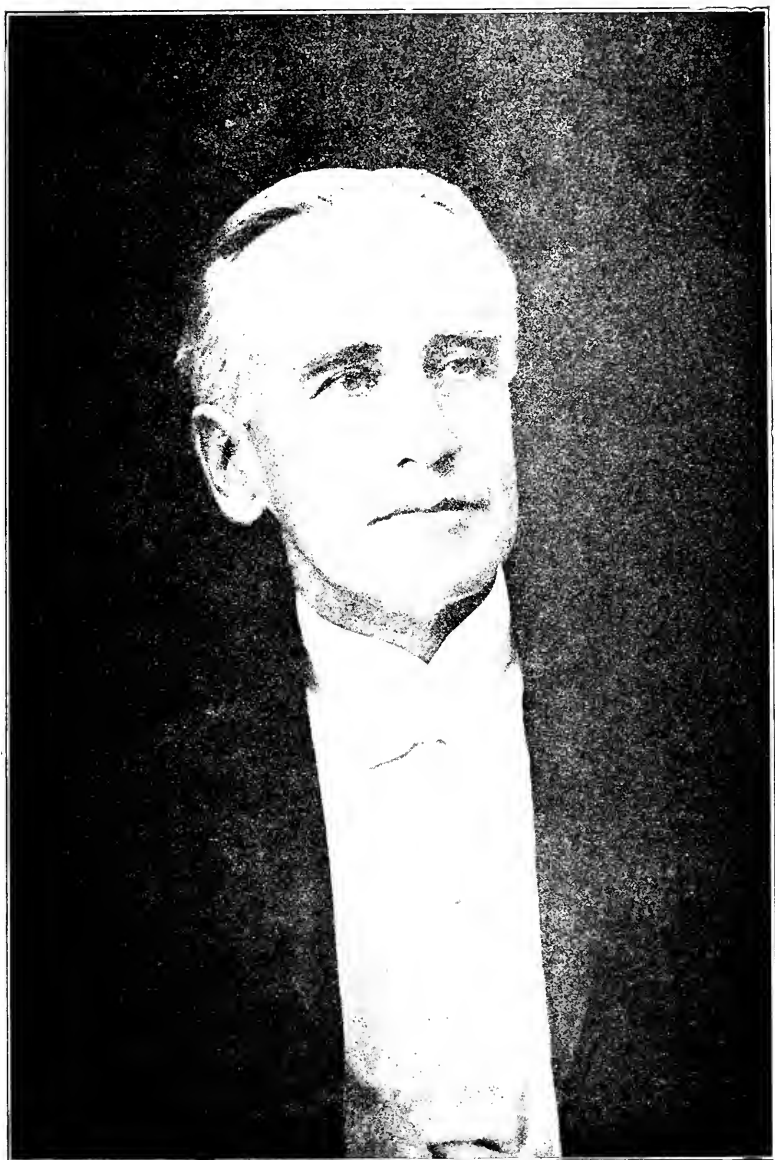


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POEMS OF THE YOSEMITE VALLEY

DESCRIPTIVE POEMS

by

— ROBERT JARVIE BUCHANAN —



PLATES by RICHARD EGARWOOD.

BERKELEY

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Dedicated to
REV. GEORGE MAXWELL
San Francisco
California



IDYLS OF THE YOSEMITE VALLEY

INTRODUCTION

The scenes along the Merced stream,
From El Portal, are like a dream;
The Cascade Falls--white wreath on high--
The joyous Merced rippling by.

This loveliness, thus charmingly,
Welcome us to Yosemite;
"Merced": the Spanish word for "Mercy";
The Indian for "Bear": "Yo Semite."



ARCHED ROCK



THE STAGE

THE GATEWAY

Upon the left, El Capitan
Oustrivals structures built by man;
This ponderous mass of solid rock,
May well resist an earthquake-shock.

Massive it stands beside the stream,
Abruptly grand its beauties seem;
Beyond it rise Three Brothers bald,
The highest, Eagle Peak is called.

On right Three Graces, radiant, rise,
A vision fair for mortal eyes;
These triple peaks with verdure clad,
Make sympathetic artists glad.

Bright Bridal Veil, a graceful fall,
Comes dancing o'er this mountain-wall;
Its radiant beauty smiling free,
Near many a stately spray-drenched tree.

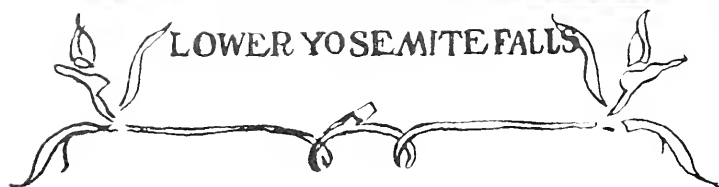


THE MEADOW

The charming verdant meadow-land
Extends around, on every hand,
The lovely flowers smile sweet and fair,
In Nature's sylvan banquet there.

Cathedral Spires and Dome now seem,
Of Florence fair, a poet's dream;
The meadow sweet and wondrous fair,
Is gemmed with lovely flowers rare.

While arched o'er all the ambient skies,
Cerulean walls of Paradise,
These vistas vast, and fair to see,
Are beautified by fall and tree.



LOWER YOSEMITE FALLS

LOST ARROW TRAIL

Lost Arrow Trail, a lovely glade,
Has charming nooks of leafy shade;
From this fair peaceful sylvan bower,
We see a sparkling, glittering shower.

Yosemite Falls, in triple leap,
Comes rolling down with thunder deep;
The spray-drenched foliage smiling fair,
Gives to these falls a setting rare.

Thus from the valley's northern wall,
Loud o'er the vale these waters call,
Yosemite! A marvel grand,
Throughout all time, in every land.

Oh vibrant liquid overture!
Whose tones swell out so rich and pure,
Rapturous anthem--sweet and low--
Heaven's harmonies, as heard below.



YOSEMITE FALLS

These lovely falls, a vision bright,
Sparkle and gleam, in bright sunlight.
The waters, in their basins caught,
Thunder and roar, with music fraught.

Then dashing on, in rapid flight,
They leap and pass beyond our sight.
In leafy shade, 'neath azure sky,
Yosemite sings its lullaby.



SCENE FROM YOSEMITE PT.

TRAIL TO YOSEMITE POINT

With ecstasy and hearts afire,
To loftier heights we now aspire,
Reaching at last the dizzy brink,
Where swirling waters swiftly sink.

Thence to Yosemite Point we climb,
And gaze upon a scene sublime.
The meadow, far below us lies,
And cloud-wreathes float in summer skies.



SCENES FROM YOSEMITE POINT

Far on the Valley's southern wall,
Stands Sentinel Rock, like castle tall,
While higher up, in brighter light,
Sentinel Dome shines snowy white.

Grand Glacier Point on this same height,
Is now before our raptured sight.
Above the Valley, high in air,
Great Glacier Rock is also there.

Mount Starr King on this distant crest,
Towers high aloft above the rest,
As its great namesake--honored dead--
In San Francisco raised his head.

Beneath the North Dome's shapely height,
The Royal Arches are in sight.
Next Washington's Column, grand and bold,
As our first President of old.



SHORT TRAIL
TO GLACIER POINT

THE SHORT TRAIL TO GLACIER POINT

Sentinel Rock like rugged fort,
 O'erlooks a trail zig-zag but short,
Which, as we climb toward the skies
 Reveals new splendors to our eyes.

Nature's ethereal beauty seems
 A fabric, fair as sylvan dreams.
From every point we see below,
 The most enchanting scenery glow.

Across the vale--a lovely sight--
 Yosemite Falls reflect the light.
On right the Agassiz Column stands,
 As if there poised by cyclop-hands.

In West we see El Capitan,
 Which makes a pigmy of a man,
Three Graces tower toward the sky,
 Three Brothers with their beauty vie.

In East the Royal Arches stand,
 And Half Dome's massive outline grand;
Tenaya Creek here joins Merced,
 Cloud's Rest in distance, towers o'erhead.



YOSEMITE FALLS



WOODLAND PATH



GLACIER ROCK

SCENES FROM GLACIER POINT

But when on Glacier Point we stand,
Behold a scene supremely grand!
A glorious sight upon us dawns,
While at our feet a chasm yawns.

A depth profound beneath us lies,
And over all the cloud-decked skies;
The birds fly in this aerial sea,
As free as God made them to be.

El Capitan stands in distant west;
Yosemite Falls from northern crest;
In east, the North Dome towering grand,
And Half Dome, etched by Glacial hand.

These domes have weathered many a storm,
Likewise Mount Watkins' graceful form:
Cloud's Rest uprises high in air,
Beyond Tenaya Canon fair.

A vista vast, as ever seen,
With charming Mirror Lake between;
These lovely scenes forever glow,
With trees which near the streamlets grow.



MERCED VALLEY FROM GLACIER PT.

PANORAMA OF THE MERCED VALLEY

The Merced Valley on our right,
Reveals to us a glorious sight,
Among Sierra peaks, we see,
Cloud's Rest and Cap of Liberty.

Nevada Falls, and Vernal bright,
With Panorama Rock in sight;
The High Sierra peaks on guard,
Rise high above the meadow-sward.

These snow-capped hills of just renown,
Enhance these scenes with glistening crown.
With charming grace, these snow-peaks high,
Enthrall our senses--charm our eye.

These luminous mountains, raised on high,
Smile radiant 'neath the azure sky.
Exultant throbs the vibrant air.
Radiance of beauty everywhere.



SCENES FROM PANORAMA ROCK

On Panorama Rock we stand,
From which behold an outlook grand!
Great Glacier Point--grim cliff so high,
Towers on the left toward the sky.

Old Grizzly Point on right is seen,
The rippling Merced flows between.
The Snow Plants gleam with crimson glow,
Emerging through the melting snow.



HALF DOME



SCENE FROM GLACIER PT.

LIBERTY CAP

Liberty Cap, graceful and tall--
 O'erlooks a charming waterfall--
Nevada Falls--a cascade great,
 Comes curving o'er its water-gate.

And dashing down with furious might,
 It gleams like burnished silver bright.
Grand scenes are these, with beauty set,
 Near by the spray-drenched trail is wet.

This slippery, rugged path we tread,
 And have at times just cause for dread.
Upon the river's rocky ridge,
 Stands Lady Franklin Rock near bridge.

While Merced, answering ocean's call,
 Leaps from its ledge in Vernal Fall;
With sweetest charm, this fall is seen,
 An avenue of trees between.

A wider fall, but not so high,
 As others in the valley nigh.
Its fleecy softness charms our eyes,
 Neath radiant blue of summer skies.

As o'er the rustic path we tread,
 The Vernal Fall is seen o'erhead.
Crossing Merced we onward go,
 Toward the Happy Isles below.



SCENES OF THE HAPPY ISLES



SCENES FROM SIERRA POINT

Sierra Point, a vantage rare,
From which to see these visions fair,
O'erlooking Happy Isles it stands,
The finest views of all commands.

On left the Cap of Liberty,
A scene superbly fair to see;
Nevada Falls--a glimpse is seen,
A ledge in foreground comes between.

Sweet Vernal Fall upon the left,
Is seen within its verdant cleft;
Illilouette Falls also in sight,
Yosemite Falls upon our right.



THE HAPPY ISLES

The Happy Isles, whose winsome smiles,
Show Nature's most attractive wiles,
For Spring awakes from Winter's sleep,
And nesting birds sing low and deep.

Merced's sweet, rippling roundelay
Chants joyfully this glorious day,
And jocund, speeding through the vale,
Sings its glad song, near lower trail.



OLD INDIAN WOMAN

NIGHTFALL IN THE YOSEMITE VALLEY

When night steals o'er the mountain-crest,
The Valley lies in peaceful rest,
The flitting shadows brooding there,
Bring surcease from the weight of care.

Across the Valley--thunder riven--
Behold Yosemite's gleam from heaven!
A radiant cloud from brink to howl,
A cascade bright, of pearls, they roll.

These lambent falls, with fleecy spray,
Roll down, in most exuberant play,
They throb, they sway in bright moonlight,
And thus go dancing through the night.

This flowing vision in softest light,
Our spirits bring supreme delight;
Quintessant peace pervades the scene,
From west to east, the hills between.

In dazzling white the mountains stand,
Like towers of light, on every hand;
While shining in the moon's fair beams,
A silver band fair Merced seems.

The eyes of night grow faint and dim,
Above Yosemite's rocky rim.
An Apotheosis of light,
Enwraps the vale this lovely night.



MT. WATKINS
and
MIRROR LAKE

DAYBREAK IN THE YOSEMITE VALLEY

When first the day begins to break,
The placid pool of Mirror Lake
Becomes a chalice--crystal-clear--
In whose dark depths the skies appear.

Sweet mountain lake! Oh, wondrous sight!
A ray, and then a flush of light;
The landscape and the lambent sky
In your black bowl resplendent lie.

There even the clouds themselves, are massed
In gorgeous glory unsurpassed;
Supernal scenes of radiance rare,
Reflected in the morning fair.

Cloud's Rest like diadem of white,
Glorified in pale crimson light,
The Half Dome-cliff, and Watkins fair,
Stand luminous in pellucid air.

But landscapes and the dark cliff high,
Point down to the refulgent sky.
The King of Day has kissed the lake,
The splendors now its depths forsake.

Only a woodland pond is seen--
Tenaya Creek--the hills between;
Unglorified through day and night,
To glow again next dawning light.

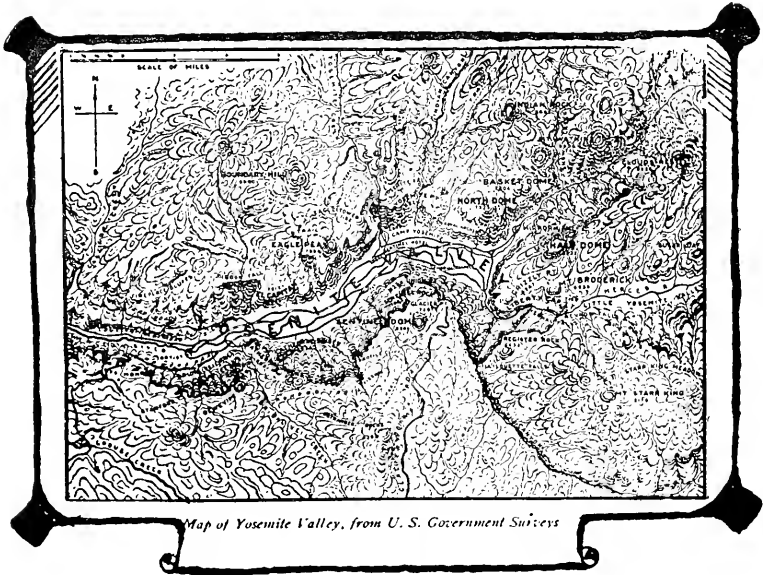
FAREWELL

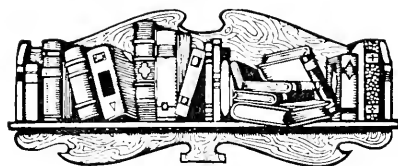
We'll ne'er forget the joyous days,
We spent among those winding ways;
Our days to come will brightened be,
With memories of Yosemite.

Those waterfalls! Those mountain climbs!
Those wondrous visions! All sublime.
A fond farewell we say to thee,
O, glorious, grand Yosemite!

Robert Jarvie Buchanan.

Berkeley, California.
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